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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 22493

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REF: STATE 170264

1. WE HAVE HEARD STORY ABOUT THIEU AND SENATE CONTAINED REFTEL. WHICH SAYS THAT MILITARY LEADERS WILL AGAIN ATTEMPT CHOOSE BETWEEN THIEU AND KY AT A MEETING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 10. LOCAL PRESS APRIL 8 QUOTES GENERAL THIEU AS SAYING IN SPEECH AT THU DUC OFFICERS SCHOOL THAT THE MILITARY CANDIDATE WILL BE CHOSE EARLY NEXT MONTH. THERE ARE NUMBER OTHER STORIES BEING PASSED ABOUT IN SAIGON CIRCLES ON THIS VITAL QUESTION.

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PAGE 2 RUMJIR 22493 C O N F I D E N T I A L
2. SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, THE QUESTION REMAINS UNRESOLVED AT THIS TIME. BOTH THIEU AND KY WOULD LIKE TO RUN, AND BOTH ARE APPARENTLY STILL MANEUVERING IN AN EFFORT TO SECURE THE NOMINATION. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME IS A PRIVATE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO MEN, AND THAT KY PROBABLY HAS A SLIGHTLY BETTER PROSPECT. THE TIMING OF THE DECISION IS MOST UNCERTAIN, BUT PRESSURES ARE MOUNTING AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE DECISION WILL BE TAKEN WITHIN A FEW WEEKS AND PERHAPS EVEN WITHIN A FEW DAYS. WE WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE TO WATCH THIS SITUATION VERY CLOSELY.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 10/6/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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